

the Goll amendment knowing full well that even this increase, the small increase in benefits, is still not in total conformity with what many, many people across this state are telling me. But I do believe in all sincerity that a modest increase is perhaps the way to go. It seems like every two years this body becomes involved in an auction on workers compensation benefits. So I think a modest increase is in order, in spite of what so many people are telling me. A 5 percent boost, from \$200 to \$210, in the maximum weekly benefits, I think, is perhaps defensible even in today's economic times. It will have to be defended by many of us. So I think the Goll amendment to the Schmit amendment is reasonable under the circumstances. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR LAMB: At this time we would like to recognize guests of Senator Shirley Marsh, 75 third and fourth graders from the Prescott School, accompanied by their teachers. Senator Marsh's granddaughter, Jennifer DeCamp is in the group and, of course, John DeCamp's daughter. Would you young people rise and be recognized by the Legislature. Thank you for attending. The next speaker on the list is Senator Hefner.

SENATOR HEFNER: Mr. President and members of the body, I rise to support the Goll amendment to the Schmit amendment. I think we've got to remember that we are in difficult economic times. Another increase will certainly increase the cost of doing business. I think that the Schmit amendment was a little too large an increase, and Goll's amendment makes it a little more reasonable increase. I've been getting letters saying that I shouldn't support any increase. But I think we've got to be realistic about this too, but the businesses along main street cannot afford too much of an increase. They are suffering along with our agricultural economy. If we increase it too much, it will just be that straw that breaks the camel's back. Like Senator Barrett said just previously, two years ago we did increase this. We increased it, I think, 11 or 12 percent. So now, with another five percent increase I think this is reasonable, I think it is fair to those employees. So I would urge you to vote for the Goll amendment.

SENATOR LAMB: The Chair recognizes Senator Labedz.

SENATOR LABEDZ: Thank you, Mr. President. Members of the